



Customer Focus

A service update newsletter for valued DAS customers

VOLUME 7 ISSUE 2

MARCH/APRIL 2010

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Crosswalk Reminder	2
New Information Security Compliance Standard	3
E020 Update	3
Iowa School Alerts	3
Information Security Awareness Training	3
Customer Service Center Changes	3
Software Being Sold in Europe	4
Vendors Reduce Contract Pricing	4
Calendar of Events	4
Diversity Council Update	5
CPM Group Wins Award	5
PDS Updates	6

Customer Focus is a bi-monthly update about the Department of Administrative Services for Iowa state government agencies. For more information about DAS, please visit our website at <http://das.iowa.gov>.

This issue's contributors: Judy Akre, Robert Bailey, Ed Holland, Kit Krogmeier, Debbie O'Leary, Joan Oyibo, Bob Pals, Darcy Pech, Jim Pierson, Alison Radl, Laura Riordan, Lorrie Tritch, Bill West.

Contact the editor at DASnews@iowa.gov or 515-242-5038. We encourage your feedback.

State Offers Retirement Incentive Package

If you are eligible to retire, you might be interested in the State Employee Retirement Incentive Program (SERIP). SERIP offers you financial and state-sponsored health insurance incentives to retire from the State.

You must apply for SERIP before April 15, 2010. Once your application has been approved, you may leave state employment any time after providing the appropriate notice to your department, but you must separate from state employment no later than June 24, 2010.

If you're interested in applying for SERIP, your first step is to contact IPERS at 515-281-0020 or 1-800-622-3849 for an estimate of your monthly retirement benefit and to submit an application for your IPERS benefits. You must submit an application for IPERS monthly benefits no later than the date you separate employment with the State.

Eligibility

You're eligible for SERIP if you are a permanent full-time or part-time benefit-eligible employee of the Executive Branch, community-based corrections or employed in the office of a statewide elected official. Also, you must be fifty-five (55) years of age as of July 31, 2010.

Financial Incentive

You will receive a payout of up to \$2,000 from your unused sick leave balance at retirement.

In addition, you will be paid your unused vacation balance at retirement plus a financial incentive of \$1,000 for every full year of state service that you completed as of your separation of employment from the State. The minimum incentive is \$10,000 for ten full years of state service and the maximum is \$25,000 for twenty-five full years of state service. You can have more than 25 years of state service,

...continued on page 2

E-mail Consolidation Results in Rate Reduction

Governor Culver's Executive Order 20 mandated that all state e-mail systems be moved to the centralized system operated by DAS-ITE. While this is no small task for affected agencies, it has already proven to result in big savings, and not just for the agencies currently moving to the central system.

Iowa Workforce Development has been coordinating with DAS-ITE to transition their 1,843 e-mail boxes to transition their 1,843 e-mail boxes to ITE's enterprise e-mail platform. This effort was recently completed and, as a result, the cost of maintaining the e-mail system is spread out over more users, lowering the cost for everyone.

Effective February 1, 2010, the cost of an e-mail inbox went from \$9.76/month/e-mail box to \$6.98/month/e-mail box. That's a 30% savings for each customer. As more agencies come online, that price could go even lower.

Although such changes are never easy, we thank IWD and the others who have moved forward with this initiative – it's already creating good results across state government! DAS stands ready to assist other agencies through this process. Please contact Matt Behrens in ITE (matt.behrens@iowa.gov) if you have any questions about the transition for your agency.

State Offers Retirement Incentive Package

continued from Page 1

but you will only be paid for up to 25 years.

This incentive will be paid in equal payments (20%) for a total of five (5) years (2010 – 2014). The first payment will be mailed to your home on or around September 24, 2010. The remaining payments will be paid annually in September of 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014.

In the event of your death before the five payouts are made, the remaining payment(s) will be made to your beneficiary.

Health Insurance Contributions

In addition to the financial incentive, you will receive a minimum of five (5) years of state contributions toward the premiums of a state-sponsored health insurance plan either through the Sick Leave Insurance Program (SLIP), SERIP or a combination of both programs.

SLIP takes your unused sick leave balance and uses that balance to pay the state share of the health insurance you select and you pay the active employee premium. SLIP continues to pay the state share of the health insurance premium until the account is exhausted or you become eligible for Medicare (in most cases, age 65).

More information on SLIP is available at the DAS Benefits website - http://benefits.iowa.gov/retirees_slip.html.

If you exhaust your SLIP account or you become Medicare-eligible within 5 years of retirement, you will receive SERIP contributions for the remainder of 5 years (including the time that SLIP was used).

Depending upon the coverage level (single or family) you elect, the state health insurance contribution is the Blue Access premium in effect each year for the 5 years you participate in the program starting upon your termination date. If the health plan you select includes someone who is Medicare-eligible, the state share is the Blue Access with SilverScript premiums.

Under SERIP, you can select any health insurance plan and coverage level but the state contribution is the premium of either the Blue Access single or family premium and you will pay the difference. Also, if you are Medicare-eligible and you elect SilverScript, you are responsible for the SilverScript premium.

You can continue to participate in SERIP even when you become Medicare-eligible (in most cases, age 65) as long as you have not received a total of five years of state contributions toward health insurance.

If your spouse is covered under your state health insurance plan at the time of your death, he or she can continue health coverage for his or her lifetime. In the event of your death within five (5) years of your retirement, your spouse will receive the remaining years of SERIP health insurance contributions.

Finally, after the state subsidy ends (SLIP or SERIP), you are eligible to continue health insurance coverage in the State's retiree health insurance group with no additional contribution from the State.

Re-employment with the State

A component of SERIP is that you will never apply for or accept future employment with the State of Iowa as a permanent employee, temporary employee, consultant or independent contractor, except as an elected official or as an appointee to a state board or commission.

Additional Information

If you're interested in SERIP, review the SERIP website, attend an on-site presentation on the Capitol Complex or register for a webcast. Over the next six weeks, DAS-HRE will be having nine on-site sessions on the Capitol Complex and twenty-two webcasts about SERIP.

If you have questions about SERIP, contact Rachel Orris (rachel.orris@iowa.gov) at 515-281-6124 or visit the SERIP website <http://benefits.iowa.gov/serip.html>.

Crosswalk reminder from the Safety Committee

The crosswalks on East Court Avenue are there to provide a safer path for pedestrians across a busy street. For your safety, please cross the street only at the marked crosswalks and, where available, use the button-activated lights to alert traffic. The flashing lights help oncoming traffic see that you wish to cross.

As always, be vigilant and careful, even with the flashing crosswalk signs present.



Notice: New Information Security Compliance Standard in Effect

Agency directors and chief information officers (CIOs) have been notified of a new IT standard in effect for participating state agencies. The State of Iowa Information Security Compliance Standard was reviewed by the Technology Governance Board (TGB), the Joint Chief Information Officers (JCIOs) and the CIO council, and opened to public comment, before being adopted by DAS.

This standard establishes information security compliance reporting requirements for participating State of Iowa Agencies. The reports will update the TGB on the current status of agency compliance with security standards and ongoing efforts to reduce risk.

For more information please review Chapter 12 – IT Security at http://das.ite.iowa.gov/standards/enterprise_it/index.html.

Iowa School Alerts in Use by Two-thirds of Districts

242 of the 365 school districts in Iowa are using the Iowa School Alerts automated messaging application designed and supported by DAS-ITE. There are currently over 27,000 registered users. With this winter's snowfall surpassing the record 1898-1899 winter, the Iowa School Alerts system has been used extensively this school year. There have been just over 6,000 notifications sent by school districts in the current school year that have generated in excess of 439,000 e-mail messages to parents, media, and businesses.

For more information about Iowa School Alerts go to <https://schoolalerts.iowa.gov>.

E020 Update

DAS-ITE has assembled four project teams to research, evaluate and recommend ways to implement the IT-related measures listed in support of Executive Order 20. The IT Redesign teams are E-mail Messaging Suite; Infrastructure Help Desks; Desktops, Laptops, Thin Clients; and Networks LAN/CAN. ITE asked the chief information officers (CIOs) from every executive branch agency to recommend staff to serve on these teams so there is broad representation. The teams had their initial kickoff meeting January 21. Since that time, each team has met to discuss the scope of their project and to work on the data collection process.

A critical component of the data gathering process involves identifying the current state of IT services within every state agency. To accomplish this, the four teams developed a joint survey that was sent to every department's CIO. The survey discusses the agency's IT business needs, federal requirements, policies and procedures, hardware, software, staffing and associated costs. Additional surveys have been sent to the CIO's from other states that have or are consolidating IT services to learn from their efforts. To learn more about the IT Redesign Initiatives, please visit <http://itr.iowa.gov/gf/project/itr>.

Information Security Awareness Training

Information security awareness training helps state employees keep up to date on security best practices and the cyber threats facing agencies. Participating agencies are required to provide annual security awareness training for all employees. The Information Security Office provides free information security awareness training to agencies. Please contact Alison Radl at alison.radl@iowa.gov for more information.

Making the Call Easier

One size fits all may be effective when advertising certain products, but when the topic is customer service and, more specifically, telephone numbers for customer service, only one number can lead to unanswered questions and frustration.

That's why DAS-GSE is converting its Customer Service Line (242-5120) to a more user-friendly format where customers are assured of being connected to the right people and technicians.

Callers will have numeric options for information on:

- Emergency/Post 16
- General information about state government services or directions
- Building or grounds issues
- Parking permits, stickers or building access on the Capitol Complex

The new Customer Service system will be active in the next few weeks so, whenever you call 242-5120, you can count on being connected to the right people right away.

DAS Employee Creates Software Being Sold in Europe

It didn't seem like a big deal when Kay Rozeboom, an IT specialist in DAS's Information Technology Enterprise (ITE), asked her boss if she could try to write a SOA (Service Oriented Architecture) application for the mainframe. SOA is a relatively new advancement in IT that allows different applications to share information in a consistent and secure way. For example, when you enter your ZIP code on one website and it pulls weather information for your area from another website, the behind-the-scenes mechanism that makes that work is probably a SOA application.

"Just because we had not done it before was no reason not to let her try," said Bob Pals, Kay's supervisor. She was successful, and soon Kay was demonstrating sample applications to anyone who would watch, and then even started to use the services in production applications.

Kay explained her thinking on the project this way: "I was trying to address a need for our mainframe applications to communicate with non-mainframe applications, both inside and outside the State. Because DAS supports many different departments, I had to write the software to be flexible so that it could work with all the different mainframe applications that our customers use. As a result, it did not require many changes to work anywhere."

"That's when things got interesting," said Bob. And when a little side project started in the basement of the Hoover Building got the attention of a European company.

Kay belongs to an online group of mainframe people who share information and help each other with questions and problems. She was discussing her SOA project with a

contact in Europe, who mentioned it to a Formula OpenSoft salesman, who then contacted DAS-ITE. "It was pure luck," Kay said.

Formula OpenSoft, based in the Netherlands, wanted to license the software Kay had developed for resale worldwide.

Mark Uhrin, ITE administrator for Application Development and E-Government Services, opened negotiations with the company that led to a deal that created a new revenue stream for the State of Iowa. The State received payment for the licensing of the software, and will continue to receive a percentage of each license sold from here on out. Revenue will be in the tens of thousands of dollars, at minimum.



Bob Pals, Kay Rozeboom, Ray Walton

"I hoped that [this application] would be useful to DAS customers," said Kay, "but I never expected it to actually make money!"

On February 22, 2010, the first licensed copy of this application went into production in Spain.

Kudos to Kay for doing what had not been done before, and doing so with a level of quality such that it could be commercialized to bring in extra revenue. For her efforts Kay received the 2009 Governor's Golden Dome Award.

Vendors Reduce Contract Pricing at State's Request

DAS Procurement has requested vendors temporarily reduce their contract price as a result of Iowa's current economic situation. So far, 27 vendors have agreed to a price reduction. Most of the discounts offered are 5% off current pricing through the end of the fiscal year on items such as carpet, computer software, exhibits and displays, lamps, windows and fathead minnows (yes, minnows). Total savings to be realized by the State will depend on how much is purchased from these reduced-price contracts.

Contact DAS Procurement at purchasing.mailbox@iowa.gov or 515-281-6355 if you have questions or need more information.

Capitol Complex Calendar of Events

March 2010

Reminder! Don't forget to complete and return your 2010 Census questionnaire!

April 2010

April 2

SEHARC Bloodmobile – Parking Lot #26 (south of E. Court Ave.)

April 5-9

Habitat for Humanity House Build – Finkbine Street (west of the Capitol) – note: Finkbine will be closed to traffic

April 8

Bloodmobile bus – Lucas Parking Lot

April 28

Workers Memorial Day event – Lawn by IWD Building

Diversity Council Update

The Diversity Council, created by Executive Order Four in 2007, has made a number of important recommendations in support of Governor Chester (Chet) Culver's stated goal to achieve and maintain a diverse workforce in state government. The Governor has endorsed 10 recommendations made by the Council. A few of the key recommendations and progress the State has made to implement them include:

Hiring Practices

DAS has begun the review of departments' hiring practices. Final reports have been issued to five departments, and five others are in progress. The ultimate goal of this process is to standardize these processes as much as possible and promote compliance with the State's *Applicant Screening Manual*.

Diversity Plans

Departments are required to identify specific methods that departments will use to increase diversity in their workforce. In FY 2009 diversity plans were incorporated with the affirmative action plan into the statewide workforce planning effort. We will continue to refine this process in FY 2010.

Diversity Training

Nearly all state employees in the executive branch received diversity training by the end of 2009. All managers and

supervisors in the Executive Branch have been trained and DAS offers ongoing diversity training for managers and supervisors. Additional training options are being developed in the areas of improving interview skills for state employees and recognizing cultural differences when conducting interviews.

Diversity Council Subcommittees

Much of the work of the Diversity Council is conducted by five subcommittees. These committees allow council members to focus on specific areas related to EO4 and provide recommendations to the Diversity Council. These committees currently include:

- Training Strategy Subcommittee
- Accountability Strategy Subcommittee
- Diversity Plans Strategy Subcommittee
- Communications Strategy Subcommittee
- Organizational Strategy Subcommittee

New Member

At the January meeting the Diversity Council welcomed new member James Ballard. Mr. Ballard is a retired Human Resources Manager for John Deere & Company.

For more information about the Diversity Council, its members, and progress, please go to: <http://das.hre.iowa.gov/>.

CPM Group Wins Askew Award

In December 2009 a group from the Certified Public Manager (CPM) program, Cohort 9, was honored with the George Askew Award.

George Askew was a leader in the CPM Program at the state and national level, serving as President of the American Association of Certified Public Managers (AACPM) in 1992-93. He is considered the "first CPM" as his was the first name called in the first-ever CPM graduation ceremony in Georgia in 1983. The Askew Award is given annually to each state by the AACPM to acknowledge the efforts of those who have demonstrated exemplary work in the completion of their CPM projects. The Askew Award winner is given a medallion, stating: "For the utilization of management practices exemplifying the philosophy of the American Academy of Certified Public Managers in the completion of an exceptional curriculum project."

Congratulations! The group who won Iowa's award was a mix of state, county and university employees. The team consisted of:



- Daniela Fassbender, Drake University
- Teresa Griffith, Iowa Veterans Home Marshalltown
- Sara McMillan, Polk County Crisis and Advocacy Services
- Joan Oyibo, Department of Administrative Services (now at Iowa Workforce Development)
- Cynthia Brantley, Department of Public Safety, DCI

Their capstone project was titled "Sustainable Work Place Design: Creating a Holistic Working Environment which has Economic, Social and Environmental Benefits."

For more information about the CPM program go to <http://learnatpds.iowa.gov/cpm/index.htm>.

Webinar Series - Live Tuesdays at Two

PDS is pleased to bring you a new training series through distance-learning. Webinars are growing in popularity for many reasons but mainly because of cost-savings.

Participants can access essential training at a fraction of the cost of an in-person seminar without incurring travel expenses. PDS webinars are also recorded and can be accessed 24/7.

Gather your team in meeting room and with the use of a laptop and a projector, train everyone at one low price.

Webinars

2:00 - 3:30pm

\$49 per session

Sessions will be recorded for 24/7 access

MARCH

- [Conflict Resolution in the Workplace](#)
(MTS WB 010) Recording available, Roxanne Rogers
- [Conducting Meaningful Performance Evaluations](#)
(MTS WB 011) March 9, Roxanne Rogers
- [Complying with ADA and ADAAA](#)
(MTS WB 012) March 16, Roxanne Rogers
- [Preventing Sexual Harassment for Supervisors](#)
(MTS WB 013) March 30, Tom Good

APRIL

- [Preventing Sexual Harassment for Employees](#)
(MTS WB 014) April 6, Tom Good
- [Complying with the NEW FMLA Regulations](#)
(MTS WB 015) April 13, Roxanne Rogers
- [Understanding & Complying with the EEO and AA](#)
(MTS WB 016) April 20, Roxanne Rogers
- [Employee Recognition on a Shoestring Budget](#)
(WTS WB 017) April 27, Roxanne Rogers

Your Instructors:

Tom Good, with the Iowa Civil Rights Commission has more than 20 years experience as both a trainer and investigator, specializing in all areas of discrimination. He has conducted countless sessions across the state on civil rights topics such as harassment, fair lending, fair housing and diversity.

Roxanne Rogers, author, entrepreneur and educator, has a rich background in curriculum development and employment issues. A national radio talk show host for nearly ten years on WHO radio's "The Career Connection", Roxanne covered workplace issues and job search strategies.

Class registrations are coordinated through your Training Liaison. As always, feel free to call Judy Akre, program coordinator, direct at 515-281-6383 or e-mail at pds@iowa.gov.

Upcoming Courses

Enroll now for upcoming sessions! Check out our website for our available course offerings.

March Workshops

[Managing Effective Meetings](#)
(SC242) March 23, \$60

[Critical Competencies and Essential Functions](#)
(NC303) March 24, \$49

[Fundamentals of Supervision](#)
(NC151) March 31, \$99

[March Calendar](#)



April Workshops

[Influencing & Negotiating for Results](#)
(GI218) April 1, \$159

[Communication Enhancement](#)
(GI198) April 14, \$159

[From Interview to Hire](#)
(NC301) April 28, \$99

[April Calendar](#)

For assistance with enrollment in upcoming classes, CPM, survey development, one-on-one or group coaching, special sessions or other training initiatives, please contact us via e-mail: pds@iowa.gov or call

Judy Akre 515-281-6383 - Brian Mayer 515-281-5456